



Department of Justice

Acting United States Attorney James R. Klindt
Middle District of Florida

Tampa

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Jacksonville

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CONTACT: STEVE COLE

PHONE: (813) 274-6136

FAX: (813) 274-6300

SEX OFFENDER CONVICTED OF ATTEMPTED PRODUCTION OF CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

Tampa, Florida - U.S. District Judge Richard A. Lazzara today sentenced Samuel Darryl Matthews, 54, of St. Petersburg, Florida, to life imprisonment for attempted production of child pornography. Matthews was indicted on June 14, 2007 and was found guilty on August 7, 2007.

According to evidence presented at trial, Matthews repeatedly asked his former roommate for sexually explicit photographs of his god-daughter's younger sister. Once the roommate became convinced that Matthews' requests were not going to stop, he reported Matthews to law enforcement. Thereafter, the roommate introduced Matthews to an undercover Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office detective posing as a financially-strapped mother willing to allow Matthews to take sexually explicit photographs of her 11-year-old daughter. Subsequent conversations between the two were recorded and included Matthews repeatedly asking the undercover detective for nude photographs of the girl. Ultimately, Matthews drove to meet the undercover detective and her daughter at a McDonald's restaurant, where Matthews was arrested. A search performed incident to Matthews' arrest yielded, among other items, a Polaroid camera, three digital cameras, and a book about photographing children.

This case is part of Project Safe Childhood. In February 2006, the Department of Justice created Project Safe Childhood, a national initiative designed to protect children from online exploitation and abuse. Led by the United States Attorneys Offices, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the internet, as well as identify and rescue victims. For more information on Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafechildhood.gov.

The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Innocent Images Task Force and the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Rachelle DesVaux Bedke.
